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Daily Summary of Positions on INF--Classified Developments

Poll Puts Conservatives and SPD at Dead Heat

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A poll published yesterday in Welt Am Sonntag shows the SPD pulling virtually even with the CDU/CSU (44.4 to 45.1 percent). The survey also revealed that the Free Democrats' share of the vote has grown to 4.8 percent--just under the 5 percent needed for representation in the Bundestag. The poll conflicts with previous polls, including those sponsored by the SPD, which consistently have placed the CDU/CSU 5 to 6 points ahead of the opposition. 25X1

Comment: The poll reportedly was commissioned by the FDP and deliberately released just before the FDP's convention on Saturday to enhance its stature. Previous polls by the same organization (the Institute for Practically Oriented Social Research) have placed the SPD ahead of the CDU/CSU with the FDP steadily increasing its support. Although the most recent results thus may be misleading, IPOS was the only polling organization to predict successfully the SPD victory in last month's Hamburg state elections.

Moscow Assesses Its Propaganda Effort

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The Soviets appear to be pleased with the impact of their propaganda campaign in Western Europe, and probably credit themselves, at least in part, for the recent flurry of public announcements by West European political figures calling for a reconsideration of the zero option or an interim agreement in the INF talks. The Soviets nevertheless also appear to be apprehensive about the Bush visit, fearing that the US will, in fact, emphasize its flexibility in the negotiations and, thereby, dispel the image that the US is not interested seriously in an INF accord. The Soviets are likely to seize on any such indications of US flexibility as an opportunity to appeal to West European publics for a delay in NATO's deployments in order to give arms control more time. However, the Soviets are also seriously concerned that, by emphasizing its willingness to entertain proposals other than the zero option, the US will be able to sustain NATO's commitment to deployment while pursuing a negotiated outcome. From Moscow's perspective, such a step could enable the US to "stall" the negotiations endlessly while NATO's INF deployments proceeded.

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